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September 27, 2004

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D.
Director and Chief Medical Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Thomas L. Garthwaite". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

SUBJECT: **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM: NURSE TRAINING,
RECRUITMENT AND EDUCATION**

At its March 5, 2002 meeting, the Board of Supervisors adopted a motion directing the Director of Health Services, in collaboration with the Director of Mental Health, the Sheriff, the Health Care Workforce Development Program, and Labor Management to report on issues related to nurse training, recruitment and retention. This follows my April 28, 2004 report and addresses the areas specified in the motion:

1. Discuss the feasibility of forming a joint Nursing Shortage Committee to explore ways in which Departments may collaborate to recruit, retain, and train nurses.

At the June 24, 2004 monthly Nurse Recruitment meeting, the Sheriff's Department provided nurse representation. The Nurse Recruitment Office (NRO) and the Sheriff's Department now collaborate and exchange recruitment and retention information. During the July 22, 2004 meeting, the Sheriff's Department's recruitment report was added as a standing item to the monthly agenda. DHS and the Sheriff's Department's first collaborative effort was the distribution of both Departments' recruitment literature at a recent Nurseweek Job Fair in Ontario. The recruitment booth was sponsored and staffed by DHS.

2. Availability of Federal and State funds that may be utilized to enhance the County's nurse training, recruitment, and retention efforts.

The Healthcare Workforce Development Program (HCWDP), jointly sponsored by SEIU Local 660 and DHS, continues to provide and develop Registered Nurse (RN) and Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) education and training programs, some of which are detailed below. On July 17, 2004, ten LVNs graduated from a HCWDP-sponsored LVN-to-RN training program at East Los Angeles Community College. These ten employees, in addition to four other employees that received tuition assistance from HCWDP for their RN training, are presently being prepared to pass the National Council of License Examination (NCLEX) for Registered Nurses. Once they obtain their license, these 14 employees will be placed on RN items.

The HCWDP has also been sponsoring five LVN students at St. Francis Career College. These students began their training on May 19, 2003 and will finish on October 22, 2004.

3. Retraining programs for non-nursing employees interested in becoming nurses.

On October 24, 2003, HCWDP began a two-year RN training program at El Camino Community College for 38 DHS employees working in non-nursing positions. The El Camino College program is 24 hours per week. Currently students are granted eight to sixteen hours of County time per week for class and they attend 16 hours/week on their own time. As of the end of August 2004, 33 of the original 38 students continue in the program. The HCWDP is committed to providing tutoring and other assistance to ensure successful completion of the training program. The HCWDP will also provide training to prepare the students to pass the NCLEX- RN licensure exam. Once they have completed their training and obtained licensure, DHS will place the 33 employees on RN items.

The HCWDP is presently sponsoring the following science courses required for entrance into a nursing program:

- | | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Microbiology | East Los Angeles College | September 10 – December 17, 2004 |
| • Physiology | L.A. Valley Community College | September 7 – December 18, 2004 |
| • Anatomy | El Camino Community College | September 3 – December 17, 2004 |

Following successful completion of the science prerequisites, these employees will be placed in a HCWDP-sponsored RN training program.

On March 24, 2004, HCWDP began an 18-month part-time Vocational Nursing program for 34 employees, through a contract with L.A. Unified School District using the County's College of Nursing and Allied Health and the Olive View Medical Center facilities. As of the end of August 2004, 28 of the original 34 employees continue in the program. Upon completion of this training the HCWDP will provide training to the students to assist them in passing the NCLEX for Licensed Vocational Nurses.

4. Tutoring and mentoring programs for the northern County area.

During June 2004, all Tutoring and Mentoring programs were monitored and assessed for contractual compliance and overall program progress. Each program has an appointed Nurse Advisor and tutoring/mentoring activities in place. The 2003/2004 NCLEX pass rates for those nursing students who sat for the exam were 90.63 percent (East Los Angeles Community College), 90.1 percent (Glendale Community College), and 79.07 percent (Los Angeles Valley Community College) respectively. These percentages will be monitored and used as one indicator to evaluate program success.

5. Nurse faculty grant program to enhance nursing school recruitment efforts.

Activities related to establishing a nurse grant funded program to enhance nursing school recruitment efforts remain in the planning stages. There is no new reportable activity.

6. Review course to assist Department of Health Services' employed nursing students in preparing for the NCLEX for Registered Nurses.

HCWDP sponsored a NCLEX-RN review course designed to assist eligible County employees to successfully pass the exam and receive their RN license. Seventeen students who completed their registered nurse training participated in a NCLEX-RN review course from April 28 through July 1, 2004 at the LAC+USC's College of Nursing. Thirteen were DHS employees and four were Sheriff's Department employees.

I have been providing the Board of Supervisors with this report on Nurse Training, Recruitment, and Education and a separate report on Nurse Recruitment and Retention activities. Since the information contained in both reports is similar, I will be combining the two reports. Therefore, the first combined status report will be submitted on January 5, 2005 and every six months thereafter. In the meantime, if you have any questions or require additional information, please let me know.

TLG:AD:ggc
203:018/s

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Director of Personnel
Director of Mental Health
Sheriff